

CP019

INNOVATION TRACK: PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES FOR THE AGRO-FOOD AND AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

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Keywords: innovation; entrepreneurship; agrofood; university contest; new products.

The promotion of academic entrepreneurship associated with the economic valorization of knowledge produced in universities is included in the objectives of bridging the gap between research and innovation in Europe. In this way, the Innovation Track Contest and Program aims to create the basis for a culture and dynamic of innovation in which working groups of students at MSc level are focused on an innovation program towards the development of new products and services for the agro-food and agro-environmental systems. The program includes the support of the research and innovation facilities of the Escola Superior de Biotecnologia da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, and each group can have the support of a scientific and a business mentor across the innovation process and the outcomes will be presented to the innovation ecosystem including companies and investors. The working groups follow a design and development methodology in which each team will have the possibility to be involved in the following tasks: technical-scientific feasibility studies; proof of concepts; prototyping; and a business project. The outcomes that will be assessed could include a prototype, a specification file and a business project. The results will be presented to the market through different forms of communication, with the award of monetary prizes in different categories. The Innovation Track has motivated 18 teams of students from three different Universities, 15 targeting the agro-food sector and 3 teams with projects looking for products or services with more relevance on environmental systems. Teams were also being challenged to submit their projects to other initiatives like the EcoTrophelia contest to reach wider impact. In 2018, 5 teams submitted their projects, 3 of them were present in the portuguese final fase and 1 team won the first prize and represented Portugal in the EcoTrophelia European final in Paris. The Innovation Track Contest and Program, in it's first edition, is already showing results in the involvement of the university students in the innovation processes.